

Appl. No. 09/775,715
Reply dated February 26, 2005
Reply to Office Action mailed November 30, 2004

REMARKS

The present application and its claims are directed to a document ranking system based on user behavior and a document searching system based on user behavior. Claims 7, 10, 13-17, 20-24 and 29-32 are currently pending.

REJECTIONS

With respect to the rejection of claim 10 under 35 USC 101 as directed to non-statutory subject matter, Applicant has amended the claim to overcome this rejection and the rejection should be withdrawn. Applicant has also amended claims 16-19 and 23-6 to overcome the Examiner rejection of these claims under 35 USC 112, second paragraph and this rejection should be withdrawn.

PRIOR ART REJECTION

The Examiner has rejected claims 7, 10, 13-26 and 29-32 as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,269,368 to Diamond (hereinafter "Diamond") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,539,377 to Culliss (hereinafter "Culliss"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection for the reasons set forth below as the claims are not unpatentable over Diamond and Culliss.

Independent claims 7, 10, 13 and 20 are allowable over Diamond and Culliss for at least the reason that Diamond does not disclose "determining a feature vector associated with a document, the feature vector comprising weights for one or more terms that appear in the document" as set forth in the independent claims. Diamond is an information retrieval system in which alternative representations of the query are generated to improve the search. See Col. 2, lines 8-12 and Col. 2, lines 45-50. Diamond further describes that the system modifies the query in response to user input. See Col. 2, lines 59-63. In all cases, Diamond describes a query and modifying the query (and maybe a query feature vector), but does not disclose determining the feature vector of a document as recited in the independent claims. Diamond also does not disclose other features of the independent claims as acknowledged by the examiner in his rejection.

The claims are further distinguishable over Diamond and Culliss for the reason that Culliss does not disclose "means for modifying the feature vector for the document based on a sample of user actions captured during a query of the document so that the document is more highly ranked in response to the user actions, wherein the modifying means further comprises means for adjusting a frequency value of the terms in the feature vector that match terms in a

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query that produced the list of documents so that the ranking of the document is altered in response to the adjustment of the frequency values" as set forth in the independent claims. In particular, Culliss does not disclose "means for adjusting a frequency value of the terms in the feature vector that match terms in a query that produced the list of documents so that the ranking of the document is altered in response to the adjustment of the frequency values." Culliss discloses that the key terms (Alpha, Beta, etc.) score for a document may be modified based on previous-user relevancy score (PRS) and it may affect the search results of another user. See Col. 2, lines 44- 65 and Figure 1, Nos. 30-50. However, Culliss does not disclose that the frequency value of the terms in the feature vector of the document that match terms in a query are adjusted as set forth in the claims. Therefore, the independent claims are allowable over Diamond in view of Culliss.

The dependent claims are allowable over the combination of the prior art cited by the Examiner for at least the same reasons as the independent claims above.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 7, 10, 13-17, 20-24 and 29-32 are allowable over the prior art cited by the Examiner and early allowance of these claims and the application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the number below in order to speed the prosecution of this application.

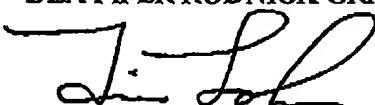
The Commissioner is authorized to charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Deposit Account No. 07-1896.

Respectfully submitted,

DLA PIPER RUDNICK GRAY CARY US LLP

Dated: May 2, 2005

By



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